

LEAG Report for July 2005

Submitted by Doug Osterman, LEAG Chair
July 8, 2005

<p>LEAG Meeting, June 29, 2005</p> <p>LEAG Attendance:</p>	<p>Doug Osterman, WIRA 9 Jean White, WRIA 8 Jeanette Dorner, Nisqually Tribe Jeff Breckel, Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board Richard Brocksmith, Hood Canal Coordinating Council Martha Neuman, Snohomish County Kristi Lynett, WDFW Sara LaBorde, WDFW Tim Smith, WDFW John Sims, Quinault Nation Frank Sweet, City of Selah Richard Brocksmith, Hood Canal Coordinating Council Rollie Geppert, IAC/SRFB Neil Aaland, IAC/SRFB Lee Napier, Grays Harbor County Alan Chapman, Lummi Tribe Steve Martin, Snake River Salmon Recovery Board</p>
<p>WDFW Report</p>	<p>WDFW will be hiring a Lead Entity Program Manager (Environmental Planner 4) this summer. The position will be posted in July. Marnie Tyler will be coming back part-time in July to head up and coordinate the Agency's salmon recovery monitoring and assessment, and in particular developing a nearshore research and monitoring plan. Sara LaBorde will continue in her role as Salmon Recovery Coordinator as a Special Assistant. The Agency's Salmon Recovery Program will be shifting it's focus from planning toward implementation and will be working in more of a team model with our Habitat and Fish Program staff.</p> <p>WDFW staff will facilitate meetings later this summer for Puget Sound LEs regarding implementation of the Regional Recovery Plan.</p> <p>Tim Smith reported that the US Senate just marked-up the Commerce Bill. The Puget Sound Salmon Fund is currently tagged at \$90 million with Washington State earmarked for around \$25 million (our current level). The House proposal is for just \$40 million. A final decision will most likely be made after the August recess. Lead Entities are encouraged to make known their interest in this bill to their members of Congress no later than September.</p> <p>Tim met with State Senate staff last week and gave them a heads up about our agency's probable supplemental budget request for the LE Program next session. They were quite receptive and look forward to seeing our proposal. WDFW will draft the proposal for LEAG review later this fall.</p>
<p>Snake River Salmon Recovery</p>	<p>Steve Martin conveyed many of the recent successful milestones of the Snake River Salmon Recovery Board, including completion of the Walla Walla watershed plan and draft salmon regional recovery plan. In addition the board will now</p>

Board Update	officially be the Lead Entity. (Historically, the Asotin County CD served that role.) The Board (as well as the Nisqually Watershed Council) will be recognized by the White House Council on Environmental Quality in St. Louis in August for their successful local cooperative partnerships. Finally, a Water Institute will be created at the Walla Walla Community College with funds provided by the legislature.
Monitoring Forum Update	LEAG and others present indicated a strong need for SRFB funds to be available for implementation monitoring for each project, instead of a sample being monitored through contract with TectraTech. LEs feel it is important to know if the projects being completed in their watershed(s) are working as proposed. It was also suggested that TectraTech and SRFB staff ensure LEs know what projects in their area are tagged for monitoring and are advised of any pertinent monitoring data and updates. For project implementation scope of work changes, Lead Entities want to clarify that standard procedure for SRFB staff is to keep LE Coordinators in the loop from pre-proposal through close-out site visits.
WSDOT-RFEG Prioritization Proposal	Richard Brocksmith noted that the TPEAC (Transportation Permit Efficiency and Accountability Committee) is potentially interested in expanding the development of the RFEG Project Prioritization Tool. While it was agreed that having a "prioritized project list" is very important and valuable, the legislatively mandated Lead Entity "habitat work schedule" would be a more inclusive and robust tracking system for potential projects. WDFW will talk with the TPEAC Senators and make sure they are aware of the work already being done by Lead Entities. In addition, the Agency's Watershed Stewards will be tasked with setting up a meeting between their Lead Entity and the respective regional WSDOT staff to ensure optimal coordination.
SRFB 6th Round	<p><u>Funding Allocation-</u> LEAG discussion favored deleting the 2% for planning across watersheds and adding 2%, instead, to the 19% that is divided equally among all Lead Entities versus to the number of species (ie: 21% divided equally to all Lead Entities). A vote was taken (in absence of consensus) on whether or not the first increment should be divided among regions (geographic regions, not necessarily to regional recovery organizations). It was suggested, as a rationale for this proposal, that Senate Bill 5610 requires that the money be distributed on the basis of regions. [Following the meeting, the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office contacted the LEAG Chair to confirm that this interpretation of SB 5610 is <i>not</i> the interpretation of the GSRO.] IAC staff indicated that its recommendation to the SRFB will be to address regional allocations as part of the 7th round. Nonetheless, the vote was in the affirmative (3 versus 2) that the SRFB should move forward on a geographic regional allocation, starting with the 6th round.</p> <p><u>Second Increment-</u> IAC staff reported that the SRFB will not consider the approach to the Second Increment until its October meeting, therefore, LEAG will need to address the issue at a meeting later this summer or early fall.</p> <p><u>Federal Funds for Listed Fish-</u> NOAA has indicated that SRFB's federal funds should only be spent on projects primarily benefiting listed species. In order to verify this, a checkbox field in PRISM will be added. This may or may not make the competition for state funds more intense.</p> <p><u>Review Panel Evaluation and Strategy/Plan Review-</u> If not already done so, Lead Entities should schedule project and strategy/plan review meetings for this</p>

	<p>summer. Some LEs are opting to just submit their strategy/plan electronically for review by the panel. All written comments by the Review Panel will be returned to the LEs within 30 days. This should be done as soon as possible, as sponsors are looking to their LE strategies for guidance on watershed priorities. Rollie noted that the greater the detail LEs provide in advance to the Panel (strategy and projects) the greater the quality of feedback the Panel will provide in return.</p> <p><u>WWRP Riparian Habitat Protection Program-</u> A new program was created by the legislature that dedicates \$40 million for riparian habitat protection projects. The grant applications will be available May 2006 with funding decisions being made the spring of 2007. Draft materials will be out later this year. If you are interested on being added to the distribution list, please email Neil at neila@iac.wa.gov. (See Handout)</p> <p><u>Mitigation Funds as match for SRFB Projects-</u> The general consensus of LEAG is that they feel mitigation funds should be allowed as match for SRFB projects, as long as the SRFB funds are not used to replace any part of the mitigation fund or payment. (See Handout)</p> <p><u>SRFB Return Funds Policy Update-</u> Neil and Rollie walked through the Policy that was adopted at the June SRFB meeting (See Handout).</p>
Lead Entity Program Review	<p>The May 25 draft of the Lead Entity Program Review was finalized. At the June SRFB meeting an additional \$72,000 in funds were provided to the Program to ensure full funding for LEs and WDFW through the biennium. A statewide re-allocation and review may occur later this year.</p> <p>LEAG members suggested that it would be helpful to have Susan Zemek of IAC staff assist with LEAG communications. DFW staff noted that it would head up communication coordination with Susan.</p>
2005-2006 Contracts	<p>The draft LE Operational Grant deliverables were discussed (See Handout). A few small changes were suggested by LEs. WDFW will be working on the new contracts throughout July. LEs will receive the same amount of funding as their historic base level of funding. All 2004-2005 final billings and progress reports are due to WDFW no later than July 15.</p>
Habitat Work Schedule Workshop	<p>WDFW will be sponsoring a workshop on August 9 aimed at sharing and brainstorming ideas to make habitat work schedules more effective and useful and to incorporate them into recovery planning implementation lists.</p>
NEXT MEETING	<p>August 9- Habitat Work Schedule Workshop (Location TBD)</p>